

PRESS RELEASE

Erik C. Peterson
United States Attorney
Western District of Wisconsin
(608) 264-5158
TTY (608) 264-5006
www.usdoj.gov/usao/wiw

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Contact Person

John W. Vaudreuil
Assistant U.S. Attorney

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Wayne Ruoho, 40, Baldwin, Wisconsin, pled guilty today in Madison before U.S. District Judge John C. Shabaz to a charge that he conspired to distribute methamphetamine. Ruoho will be sentenced on January 11, 2008 at 1:15 p.m.

Ruoho conspired from September 2001 to the end of December 2004 to distribute, and possess with the intent to distribute, methamphetamine. Ruoho traveled with co-conspirators from Minnesota to California, transporting large amounts of U.S. currency to obtain multi-pound quantities of methamphetamine; large quantities of methamphetamine obtained in California were then transported to Minnesota for distribution by Ruoho and his partners in various locations, including Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Ruoho utilized couriers to deliver methamphetamine, and personally delivered methamphetamine, to his co-conspirators for distribution in the Western District of Wisconsin. Angela Trudelle, formerly of Washburn County, Wisconsin, distributed Ruoho's methamphetamine to customers from various counties in the Western District

of Wisconsin, including Washburn and Barron Counties. Michele and Timothy Nelson distributed Ruoho's methamphetamine to customers in various counties, including St. Croix, Pierce, and Dunn Counties.

Timothy Nelson has pleaded guilty to this conspiracy and is awaiting sentencing. In addition to Michele Nelson (262 months) and Angela Trudelle (119 months), Lawrence Bauer (262 months), Terry Mortier (135 months), Richard Holland (170 months), Jamie Briesemeister (121 months), and Reanne Taylor (180 months) have all been convicted and sentenced to federal prison as a result of their involvement in this methamphetamine conspiracy.

U.S. Attorney Peterson stated that this guilty plea is the result of a long-term investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation-Narcotics Bureau; the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension; the St. Croix County Sheriff's Department; the Washburn County Sheriff's Department; and the Barron County Sheriff's Department. Prosecution of these cases has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney John W. Vaudreuil.

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